



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
**DIVISION OF FAMILY HEALTH AND WELLNESS**  
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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243

June 2014

Dear Health Care Provider:

This letter is to inform you of **infant formula changes** in the Tennessee Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) starting July 1, 2014. Please note that the **WIC Program actively promotes and supports breastfeeding as the norm for infant feeding**. The advantages of breastfeeding are numerous and include benefits to both infant and mother. However, when a mother decides to partially breastfeed, or not to breastfeed, WIC provides iron-fortified infant formula.

**Effective July 1, 2014:**

- **WIC will provide the following Similac® standard formula options per a new contract with Abbott Nutrition:**
  - **SIMILAC® ADVANCE®**
  - **SIMILAC® SOY ISOMIL®**
- **Upon physician request using WIC Medical Request for Formula/Foods, WIC will provide:**
  - **SIMILAC SENSITIVE® (19 calories/oz)**
  - **SIMILAC TOTAL COMFORT™ (19 calories/oz)**
- **WIC does not provide standard milk or soy-based infant formulas from non-contract providers under any circumstances. Examples include:**
  - Gerber®: Good Start® Gentle, Good Start® Soy, Good Start® Supplementing (Protect) or Good Start® Soothe.
  - Enfamil®: PREMIUM® Infant, ProSobee®, Gentlease®, AR®

We ask your cooperation in encouraging the use of WIC contract formulas for your WIC-eligible infants who need standard milk and soy-based formulas. Use of the contract formulas will allow WIC to serve many more nutritionally at-risk women, infants and children with inadequate incomes who are in need of these services. Therapeutic formulas will still be available in cases where medical documentation supports their use. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The required documentation and a list of qualifying conditions can be found at <http://health.state.tn.us/wic/>.

For more information regarding these WIC Program formula changes, please read the attached page. If you have questions, please contact Peggy Lewis, State WIC Director ([Margaret.t.lewis@tn.gov](mailto:Margaret.t.lewis@tn.gov)) or your local county WIC nutritionist. Thank you for your support of the Tennessee WIC Program and your continued promotion and support of breastfeeding!

Sincerely,

Peggy T. Lewis, MHE, RD, LDN  
Director, Supplemental Nutrition Programs

Michael D. Warren, MD MPH FAAP  
Director, Division of Family Health & Wellness

## **Additional Information on the July 1, 2014 Changes Pertaining to WIC Formulas**

### **Breastfeeding Promotion and Support**

Breast milk is the optimal source of infant nutrition. Compared to infants who receive human milk, formula-fed babies experience increased risk for chronic disease including diabetes, asthma, SIDS, and childhood cancers. They have increased incidence of infections such as otitis media, gastroenteritis, and respiratory tract infections. Infants who do not breastfeed are also at increased risk for obesity. Additionally, women who do not breastfeed have a higher incidence of post-partum depression, osteoporosis, and breast/ovarian cancers. Local WIC agencies have staff that can provide breastfeeding support and make appropriate referrals. WIC encourages mothers to breastfeed their babies exclusively for at least six months and continue for at least the first year of life and beyond. Since formula supplementation impacts milk supply and is associated with early weaning, WIC has lactation counselors to address early breastfeeding problems and provide electric breast pumps for those who need additional supplementing. WIC will work with mothers to be successful with breastfeeding. Additionally, WIC sponsors the Tennessee Breastfeeding Hotline, available to anyone who has questions about breastfeeding. The hotline is staffed 24/7 with certified lactation counselors and is available at **1-855-4BF-MOMS**.

### **Standard Contract Formulas**

The Tennessee WIC Program contracts with one manufacturer for the provision of iron-fortified standard infant formulas (milk-and soy-based formulas containing at least 10 mg iron/liter at a dilution rate of approximately 20 calories per ounce). Federal WIC regulations require that States use a purchasing process that maximizes full and open competition [246.16a(c)] and award the contract to the bidder who provides the lowest net wholesale cost. **Beginning July 1, 2014 the WIC contract is with Abbott Nutrition**. Food cost savings are used to enroll additional women, infants, and children in the WIC Program.

### **Alternate Contract Formulas**

In addition to the standard milk- and soy-based infant formulas, Abbott Nutrition has two 19 cal/ounce milk-based formulas that are available for use. They are for lactose sensitive infants and those who are suffering from persistent feeding issues and need a partially hydrolyzed protein formula. **These two products require medical documentation according to WIC requirements from the Food and Nutrition Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture since they are only 19 calories per ounce instead of 20 calories per ounce.**

### **Ready-to-Feed (RTF) Formulas**

In accordance with USDA federal regulations, RTF formulas can only be provided under certain circumstances, such as no sanitary water supply or restricted water supply (written documentation is needed), caregiver cannot prepare concentrate or powder formula correctly, or the infant is immunocompromised.

### **Therapeutic Formulas and WIC-eligible Nutritionals**

WIC will continue to provide WIC-authorized special formulas and other foods ONLY with a medical diagnosis and a completed physician request form. Your local WIC agency can provide you with a WIC Therapeutic Formula Request Form or you may access it online at <http://health.tn.gov/wic/>. In accordance with federal regulations [246.10c (1)(v)(B)], the following information is required in order for WIC to provide therapeutic formulas and nutritionals:

- Brand name of the formula requested
- Medical diagnosis warranting issuance of WIC formula
- Length of time the prescribed WIC formula is medically required
- Name and signature of the requesting physician, APN, or PA.

Additionally, we ask that the appropriate quantity of formula be included as well as a phone number in the event that our nutritionist needs to contact your office for clarification on a therapeutic product.